**New School Family Association Charter**

**August 2018**

(ideas and structure adapted from: *Independent School Parents’ Associations: The Good, The Bad, and Avoiding the Ugly* by John Lewis and Debra Wilson, April 2012, National Association of Independent Schools)

**Mission and Purpose**

The New School Family Association (NSFA) fosters collaboration among families, faculty and administration to support the overall mission of the school.

This collaboration will focus on promoting a strong sense of community and partnership with the school, and help to facilitate communication, cooperation, and involvement throughout the school community. To meet this objective the NSFA will include a focus on building connection among families through social events, working together to enrich to the school community, supporting teachers/classroom events, orienting and integrating new families into the community, and assisting the school in its efforts to provide opportunities to its students which may include providing financial support to the school through fund-raising activities.

As an auxiliary, volunteer-based organization within the school, NSFA will cooperate and consult with the school administration to ensure that the nature of its activities and the timing of its contributions are consistent with the school’s educational purposes and financial needs. The NSFA will be open to promoting cooperation and communication between parents and school administrators; however, the NSFA as a collective organization, is not the forum for school policy changes or parent grievances. These types of concerns can be expressed to the administration of the school from individual parents with those concerns.

**Membership and Dues**

Membership will be open to all parents, legal guardians, and grandparents of the current and alumni students enrolled at the NSoL.

Membership in the organization will not require the payment of dues.

**Organizational Structure**

Leadership Committee

(Chairperson, Vice Chair/Parent Liaison, Secretary

Lead Coordinator and Class Representatives

All other Committees/Events

(see list, Appendix C)

Auction Committee

***Leadership Committee***

This committee will lead the NSFA and coordinate activities of the organization. It will include the roles/responsibilities as indicated below. The Head of School will also be a part of this committee in a consultant role. This committee will attempt to meet monthly throughout the school year to accomplish its tasks and goals. Terms for roles on this committee will be July 1 to June 30 of the following year (ex: 7/1/18 to 6/30/19). Nominations to these roles will be organized through previous Leadership Committees and open calls to all parent volunteers.

*Chairperson Responsibilities*:

* Plan agenda/goals and schedule for Leadership Committee meetings
* Plan schedule and agenda for NSFA meetings for the academic year
* Serve as the lead on Volunteer Coordination for school-wide activities, including creating/updating a calendar and mode for organizing volunteers (ex: Sign-up Genius)
* Consult with and support all committee leads and event organizers
* Meet regularly and consult with Head of School
* Create budget with Treasurer
* Work with Secretary and school administration to build clear and regular communications with school community including, but not limited to, NSFA page on school website, SNAP, parent emails, Facebook announcements, etc
* Serves a one year term, with availability to consult to the next Chairperson the following year
* Provide updates to School Board as requested and create an end of year of year report that summarizes activities, etc
* Maintains any potential financial records and generates a year-end report to be shared with Head of School, Operations Director, and Board (as part of NSFA year-of-end report)
* Coordinates with Advancement Director and Head of School as needed throughout the year
* This role can be organized as a co-chairperson (two people) should that meet the changing needs of the organization

*Vice Chairperson/Parent Liaison*:

* Primary role to serve as Parent Liaison between administration and parents, which allows this role to focus more on community building activities
* Regularly attends NSFA meetings throughout the year, taking questions/concerns to administration, and providing responses by the next meeting. This can include, but not be limited to, ideas for fundraising, volunteerism, proposed social events, etc.
* Refers parents with more individual-based or personal concerns directly to administration
* Lead New Parent Mentoring program, which includes identifying mentor families and assisting administration with New Parent Socials or ‘Back to School’ events.
* Agrees to serve as Chairperson–elect for the next term/academic year (thus a two-year commitment, year one as VC/Parent Liaison, year two as Chairperson)
* Regularly attends Leadership Committee Meetings/Head of School and provides updates on current concerns
* Works with Secretary and/or Advancement Officer about communications between NSFA and families

*Secretary*:

* Records notes of NSFA meetings and creates a summary to be available for all parents via website/email updates
* Also takes notes in Leadership Committee Meetings to share with those committee members and Head of School as needed/maintains an ongoing document/notebook of these notes
* Other communication/correspondence as needed
* Assist Chairperson with year-end Thank You cards/letters
* Serves a one year term with option to renew for a second year

***Maria’s Table/Auction Committee***

This committee will lead the main annual fundraising event, Maria’s Table, and will organize itself with at least one committee chairperson (or a co-chair model) and subcommittees as determined by the chair and needs on a yearly basis. The chair will also be responsible for regular communication and coordination with the Leadership Committee about the general details of the event (date/time/theme, main needs, etc), and to coordinate its activities with the Head of School and Development Person/Committee at the school.

***Class Representatives***

This sub-group of the NSFA will be responsible for the main supportive function to faculty and classroom-based needs. A Lead Coordinator will be responsible for: 1) overall coordination of class representative activities and 2) regular (at least monthly) communication (via written updates or attendance at meetings) with the Leadership Committee about ongoing plans/needs/concerns among class representatives/parents. Please see *Appendix A* for Class Representative and *Appendix B* for Lead Coordinator responsibilities/guidelines.

***Other Committee/Event Leads***

This sub-group will include parents who volunteer to lead activities or events that are traditionally part of the NSoL community. The current list can be found in *Appendix C,* but this may be updated or changed as decided on by the Leadership Committee in order to best meet the changing needs of the school community.

**Other Guidelines/Considerations**

This New School Family Association operates within the guidelines of the NSoL administration, and thus the Head of School/other administrative representative has final authority over the activities, goals, and funds associated with the NSFA.

Filling positions on the Leadership Committee (other than Chairperson, which has a succession plan built-in), Auction Committee Chairperson, Class Representatives, and other committee/event leads may often start with an open call to the parents for a request of volunteers to fill these roles. The Leadership Committee will then make final decisions about these lead positions. Individuals who have served in these or similar roles in past years, may be considered as more experienced candidates in this process. However, it is important for the Leadership Committee to consider inclusion and the benefits of more experienced volunteers sharing their experiences and helping new volunteers take the lead.

Resignation from the Leadership Committee or other Committee Leads can be done by the individual giving written notice to the Chairperson at anytime. Replacements for the current academic year to those positions under this circumstance, will be appointed by the Chairperson, to keep organizational/school community needs met.

If a Leadership Committee person or other Committee Lead fails to fulfill his or her responsibilities, after given reasonable notice of concerns, may be removed from the position by a majority vote of the Leadership Committee and approval of this by the Head of School. Replacements for the current academic year to those positions under this circumstance, would be through an open request for a volunteer from NSFA community, to keep organizational/school community needs met.

The NSFA is a growing organization and this organizational structure will likely need to grow and change with the school community over time. Proposed changes can be submitted to the Leadership Committee for review and discussion; Leadership Committee and Head of School will have about 4-6 weeks to address and make a final decision on these matters.

**Appendix A**

**Class Representative Responsibilities**

Partnering with teachers in building community and coordinating parent involvement.

Thanks for volunteering and being willing to help create your classroom community! By being a Class Representative you are NOT required to do everything yourself; you are often the messenger, coordinator and reminder of classroom volunteer opportunities.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Coordinating and participating with in-class activities specific to each classroom. Please ask your teachers for their specific needs as each classroom is somewhat different.
2. Building community among your classroom by organizing at a classroom social for parents, students and teachers (preferably one in fall and spring). This can be as simple as organizing a meet-up at a local park or on the playground after school. *Please* coordinate any requests to use the school playground with administration.
3. Faculty/ Staff Lunch– Each class will be responsible for coordinating donations (Ex: money for grab and go bags and/or food/drink) to help create a luncheon for teachers on Parent-Conference days. More details will be announced from the Lead Coordinator on this.
4. Teacher Appreciation – You are welcome to coordinate gifts within your classroom. This can be as simple as notes from the children, or as elaborate as a class coordinated gift cards/cash. There will likely also be a school-wide luncheon to be organized as well.
5. Holiday Activities/ End-of-the-year Class Events- This often varies by classroom or grade levels (Ex: Early or Upper Elementary). Please discuss details by contacting your teachers.
6. On-going Activities - Class projects, maintenance, field-trips, class plays… (much of this is on the Elementary level)- Please remember to check with your teachers on a regular basis to see what volunteer opportunities would be most helpful (lunches, crafts, reading, etc).

**Other considerations/guidelines:**

    1.    Get teacher approval/feedback for all activities.  Teachers’ styles vary from room to room. Please ask for an overview of their expectations so that you can accommodate their wishes. Do not hesitate to share your ideas!

    2.    Avoid duplication by choosing one liaison to communicate with your teachers (for example, if there are co-class representatives, that you aren’t *both* setting up Sign-Up Genius, etc). Please avoid car line discussions with teachers.

    3.    Often email is the easiest way to reach the parents in your class, but please be sure to include any others who may not have access to email. Your class roster will help determine this. If you have not already received this list, please contact Stacey Huber (Admissions Director).

4.    To help with organization, Sign-Up Genius will be used to coordinate volunteers for all events. Access will be granted through the school’s account; please see additional handout or the NSFA Chairperson for details. Please ask the Lead Coordinator for assistance if you are unfamiliar with using this service.

Once Sign-Up Genius is set up, other communications such as a monthly check-in/reminder email can be helpful. Try to include or consider the following for any memos/communications:

⁃    Title/Subject – State clearly whether your memo is regarding a classroom or a school-wide event.

⁃    Your name and phone number OR the names of the parents specified as contacts for a particular activity.

-  As many pertinent details as possible. Do not assume anything.

⁃    RSVP date and phone numbers as necessary

5.    Consider letting parents know in advance of the opportunities that exist to allow them time to think about when and how they may be able to volunteer. Interclass events like Appreciation Meals can take 2-3 weeks to coordinate, so give yourselves plenty of time.

**Appendix B**

**Lead Class Coordinator Responsibilities**

Assist with leading and coordinating all Class Representative activities, and serve as a liaison between the New School Family Association Leadership Committee and Class Representatives.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Help coordinate Class Representatives with all annual events that are classroom or level (ex: Early Elementary) based, and provide guidance to Class Representatives on the timing and expectations of these events.
2. Assist Class Representatives with concerns and questions about their roles and responsibilities.
3. Communicate, on a monthly basis, via email **or** attendance at the Leadership Committee Meetings. Provide all updates on activities in the classrooms or concerns of Class Representatives. Additionally, be willing to communicate additional requests to Class Representatives for volunteering or communicating about school-wide events from the NSFA.
4. Lead Coordinator will not also be a current Class Representative, but should have been a Class Representative at least once previously.

**Appendix C**

**List of Events/Activities at NSoL**

List included activities/events that are typically done annually; subject to change.

Name of Event Date/time of yr Who organizes?

 (\*will need a lead person)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Playground Pals | August | Admin |
| Garden/Playground Workday | August | Admin/NSFA support |
| New Parent Social | August/first week of school | Admin/NSFA |
| Pinwheels for Peace | September/Peace Day | Faculty |
| Back-to School Nights | Sept/Oct | Admin/Faculty |
| Open House Events (?) | Year round | Admin/NSFA support |
| Veggie Tasting | year round, classroom based starts in Oct | NSFA\* |
| Fall Fest | Oct? | NSFA\* |
| Picture Day | Oct | Admin/NSFA support |
| Muffins with Mom | Late Oct |  Administration? |
| Book Fair (Barnes and Noble) | Nov | NSFA \* |
| Conference Lunch for Staff | Nov and Mar | NSFA/ Class Reps |
| Upper El Thanksgiving Celebration | Nov | NSFA/ Class Reps /faculty |
| Lower El Thanksgiving Celebration | Nov | NSFA/ Class Reps /faculty |
| Winter Concert | Dec | Faculty/Admin |
| Maria’s Table/Annual Auction | Anytime Feb to Apr | NSFA\* |
| Science Showcase | Feb | Faculty/Admin |
| Donuts with Dad | Feb? | Admin |
| Upper El Clubs? | Feb/Mar | Faculty/Class reps/NSFA support |
| Dances ? Middle School ?other? |  | NSFA\* |
| Spaghetti Dinner | Mar | Middle School/NSFA support |
| Grandparents/Special Friend Day | Mar? | Admin/NSFA support |
| Drama Productions (4/5th and 6-8th) | Starts Mar/April- show in Apr (6th-8th and May (4/5th) | Leah Bacon/Faculty/NSFA support? |
| Vision Screening/Kid’s Sight | April | Admin/NSFA support |
| Primary end of year Celebration | End of May | Faculty/Class Reps |
| Safety Patrol Breakfast | May | NSFA\* |
| Teacher Appreciation Lunch | May | NSFA\* |
| Art Show | May | Gwen Eberly/NSFA support |
| Other events TBD |  |  |
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